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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Washington, DC 20423

Office of Economics, Environmental Analysis and Administration

June 14, 2006

Mark Shelton, P.E.
Missouri Department of Transportation
Southeast District
2675 Main Street
P.O. Box 160
Sikeston, MO 63801

Re: STB Finance Docket No. 34672, Union Pacific Railroad Company – Acquisition and Operation Exemption – Line of the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company

Dear Mr. Shelton:

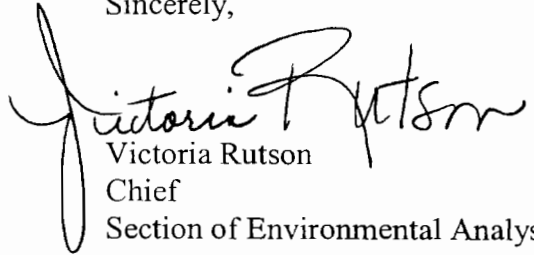
Thank you for your May 17, 2006 letter regarding the above referenced project. As you know, on March 11, 2005, the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UPRR) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10502(a), requesting that the Board exempt from U.S.C. 11323 UPRR's proposed acquisition and operation of the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) line from Rockview, Missouri to Sikeston, Missouri. Because UPRR's petition requires Federal action under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA), the office responsible for conducting the NEPA review, will be conducting an environmental review of UPRR's proposal and the reasonable and feasible alternatives to that proposal, including the "no action" alternative.

Currently, SEA is awaiting signed documentation¹ from UPRR before it may begin the environmental analysis for this project. Once the NEPA process has been initiated, SEA will work with Missouri Department of Transportation and other state and Federal agencies, and tribes that might be affected or interested in the proposed project, to identify any environmental concerns and potential mitigation measures. We will review your specific recommendations at that time.

¹ UPRR has decided to retain a "third-party contractor," who will work under the sole direction, control, and supervision of SEA at the railroad's expense. Before SEA can begin directing the work of the third party contractor, all three parties – SEA, UPRR, and the third party contractor – must sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which defines the rights and responsibilities of each party. SEA is awaiting return of the signed MOU from UPRR.

If you need further information or have any questions, please contact me at (202) 565-1545 or Catherine Glidden of my staff, who is the SEA Project Manager for this proceeding, at (202) 565-1542, gliddenc@stb.dot.gov. Thank you for your interest and participation in the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victoria Rutson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "V" and "R".

Victoria Rutson
Chief
Section of Environmental Analysis